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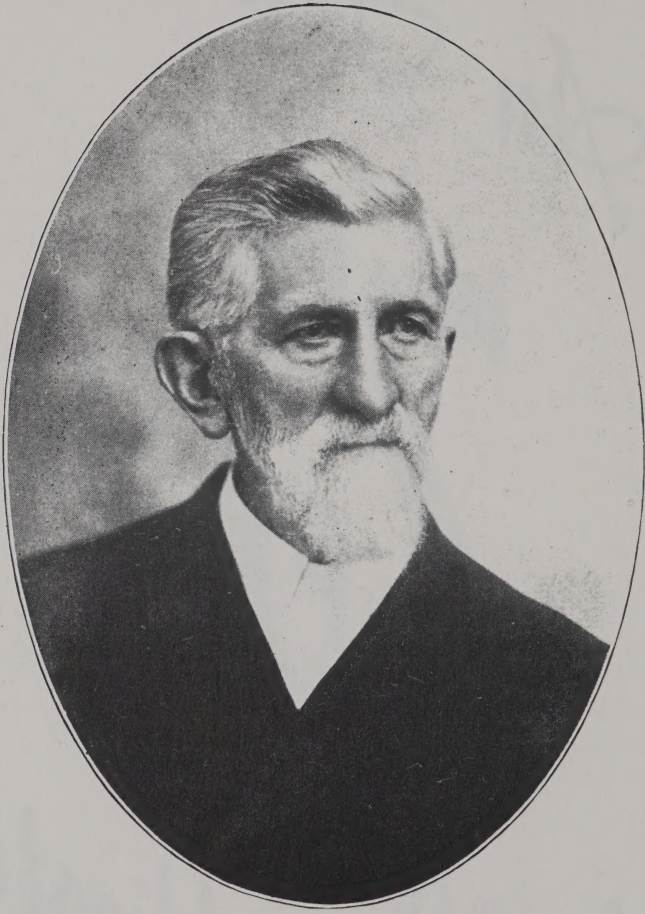
Years of  
**PROGRESS**  
for GOD





*An Historical*  
**75<sup>th</sup>**  
*Anniversary*  
*publication*

Published by  
Indiana Conference of the United Missionary Church  
Elkhart, Indiana  
Printed in U. S. A.



DANIEL BRENNEMAN



## PREFACE

In honor of the seventy-five years that camp meetings have been held in the Indiana Conference, the Conference History Committee is happy to present this brief review of the work of the United Missionary Church in the State of Indiana.

Background material for this history has been secured from a variety of sources, with special credit given to the late, Rev. A. B. Yoder, who, in addition to living through most of these years, helped to establish many of the churches mentioned, and who assisted in the plans that promoted this work. His careful chronicling of events has assisted us materially.

Joseph Kimbel has arranged for the photos and produced the art work. The Bethel Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana, has produced the book.

If you receive any satisfaction from the accomplishment of the past, or are convicted because we have done so little — we trust that it will serve to challenge you to the possibilities of the future, and to the final reward of the righteous as we hear Him say: "Well done thou good and faithful servant . . . . "

Conference History Committee

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Orlan Golden

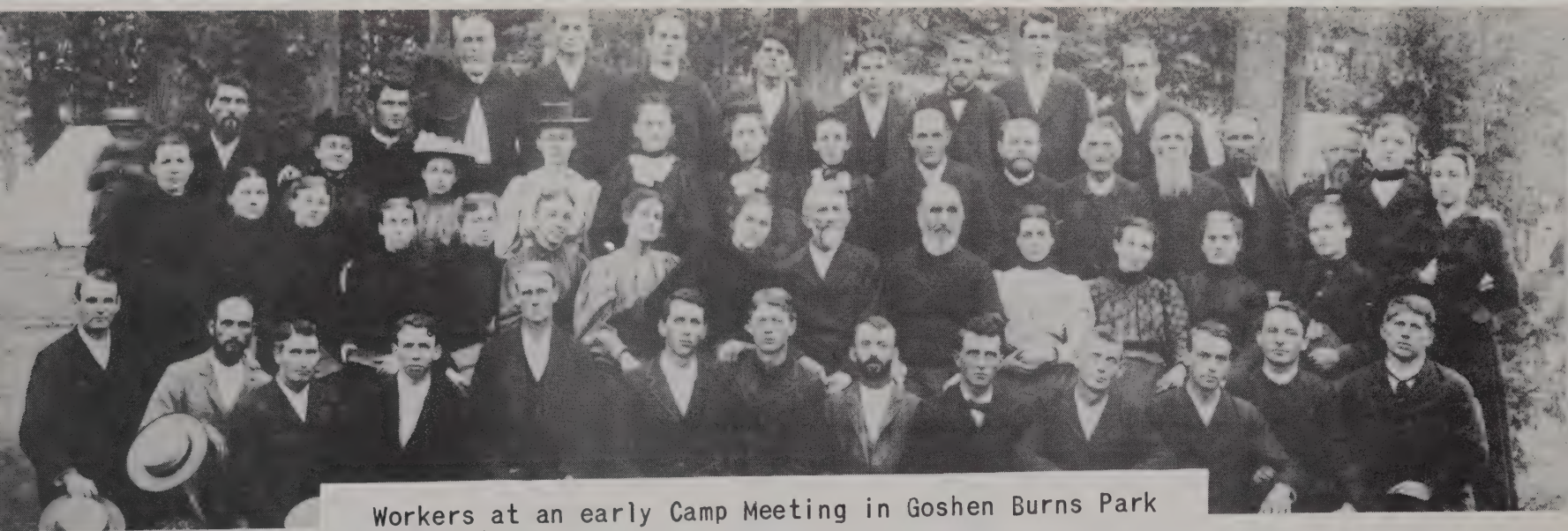
## DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES

<b>Antioch</b>	1 mile south, 3 miles west of Decatur, Indiana.
<b>Auten Chapel</b>	South Bend, Indiana. 1 mile west of Road 31 on Ireland Road, and ½ mile south.
<b>Bethel</b>	7½ miles south of Elkhart on Oakland Ave. Rd.
<b>Beulah</b>	835 Blaine Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana.
<b>Bremen</b>	Marshall and North Streets, Bremen, Indiana.
<b>Brenneman Memorial</b>	8th and Jefferson Streets, Goshen, Indiana.
<b>Burr Oak</b>	Burr Oak, Michigan.
<b>Cassopolis</b>	116 South O'Keefe Street, Cassopolis, Michigan.
<b>Cedar Road</b>	½ mile north of Road 33 on west side of Osceola, Indiana.
<b>Chapel Hill</b>	1 mile north and 1 mile east of Union, Michigan. (P. O. address, Route 1, Bristol, Indiana.)
<b>Constantine</b>	225 West Second Street, Constantine, Michigan.
<b>Edison Park</b>	Solomon and Congress Streets, South Bend, Ind.
<b>Foraker</b>	Foraker, Indiana.
<b>Gospel Center</b>	930 - 30th Street, South Bend, Indiana.
<b>Granger</b>	½ mile east of Granger, Indiana, on Road 23.
<b>Hamilton Chapel</b>	9 miles northeast of Dowagiac, Michigan, to the right off Road 40.
<b>Indiana Chapel</b>	Route 3, Bremen, Indiana.
<b>LaGrange</b>	Seymour Street, LaGrange, Indiana.
<b>LaPorte</b>	Corner 18th and A Streets, LaPorte, Indiana.
<b>Ligonier</b>	204 west 6th Street, Ligonier, Indiana.
<b>Mendon</b>	Mendon, Michigan.
<b>Mishawaka</b>	2014 Liberty Drive, Mishawaka, Indiana.
<b>Nappanee</b>	Locke Street, Nappanee, Indiana.
<b>Niles</b>	17th and Regent Streets, Niles, Michigan.
<b>North Manchester</b>	At east city limits, North Manchester, Indiana.
<b>Oak Grove</b>	Buck Road, 3 miles west and 3 miles south of Wakarusa, Ind. (P.O. add., R. 3, Nappanee, Ind.)
<b>Osolo</b>	3 miles north of Elkhart, Ind., on Heaton Lake Rd.
<b>Pleasant Hill</b>	5 miles south and 1 mile west of Bronson, Mich.
<b>Sunnyfield</b>	Corner of Harry Greene and Bashor Chapel Rds. Goshen, Indiana.
<b>Wakarusa</b>	1 block west of square, Wakarusa, Indiana.
<b>Wayside Chapel</b>	Hollyhock Road, Roseland, Indiana. (P. O. address, South Bend, Indiana.)
<b>Weisser Park</b>	Warsaw and Boltz Streets, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
<b>West Eckford</b>	6 miles south of Marshall, Michigan.
<b>West Union</b>	7 miles south of South Bend, Indiana, on Miami Highway. (P.O. address, Route 2, Bremen, Ind.)
<b>Zion</b>	Corner of Morton and Hively, Elkhart, Indiana.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Part I	COMMENCEMENT — How we came to Indiana	9
Part II	CONQUEST — A Record of early progress Containing a history of Camp Meetings	11
Part III	CONCENTRATION — New Life and Expansion Containing a review of missionary efforts	28
Part IV	CONTINUATION — Where? . . . from here? A challenge from our District Superintendent	52
Part V	CORONATION — The best is yet to come God's Word to His church	54



Workers at an early Camp Meeting in Goshen Burns Park



Ministers and delegates - 1955 Annual Conference



## Part I — COMMENCEMENT

### How we came to Indiana

The History of the Indiana Conference of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, now known as the United Missionary Church, is largely the history and development of a movement that had its origin in and around the community of Bethel, 4½ miles northeast of Wakarusa, Indiana.

About the same time that this movement began in the Bethel Community, a similar movement began in Ontario under the leadership of Solomon Eby. John Krupp and Daniel Brenneman, ministers in the Mennonite congregation at Yellow Creek, five miles north-east of Wakarusa, became interested in the movement in Canada, and together made a trip to Canada to become acquainted with the work there. Upon their return they spoke very highly of the work; but Daniel Brenneman, more conservative than Krupp, made a second trip a year later. Upon his return he was surprised to hear that one of the ministers had been excommunicated. He at once made his way to the bishop for an explanation. At a called meeting they gave as the reason for the excommunication of Krupp, "because he favored protracted meetings and even allowed women to testify." When the called meeting was asked if satisfied with what was done, they all gave their consent except Brenneman, who said, "Brethren, to be honest before God, if our members do nothing worse than to get together to read God's Word, to sing and pray and worship God, that this should be reason enough to disown them as members of the church, I candidly cannot see it that way." Soon after this meeting he was notified that he also was excommunicated for the following reasons: 1. For leaving the church and supporting an excommunicated preacher (Krupp). 2. For teaching and preaching unscriptural customs. (1 Tim. 2:11, 12; 1 Cor. 14:35). 3. For causing dissensions, and working disorderly at home and abroad.

Daniel Brenneman, the Father of this movement, was born in Fairfield County, Ohio, June 8, 1834. At the age of 23 he was ordained to the ministry at his home church (Mennonite). After serving his home church for some time he moved to Elkhart County, in 1864, settling 1½ miles north of the Yellow Creek Mennonite Church.

Under his ministry the church was revived, and crowded houses greeted him everywhere he went. His services were in demand, and contrary to customs, he held prayer meetings and revival services wherever a door was opened. There arose a demand for English preaching, and Brenneman, being able to handle both languages, was the man for the occasion. His aggressive spirit stirred up the conservative element in the church. Many families, symathetic with this new movement, were excommunicated, and many withdrew. The movement took new interest, and meetings were held in homes, school houses, halls, empty

churches, and wherever doors opened. The following school houses were used: Jones, Jamestown, Schrovers, Kurtz, South West, Swoveland, Angers, Troyer (in Michigan), North Union, East Union, and West Union. Because of their aggressive work they were called "New Mennonites". In each of these communities there were converts to, and sympathizers with, this movement and many united with the group.

The moments of unpleasantness in these early days were often overcome by a mixture of humor such as the time when a passerby in a spring wagon gave Daniel Brenneman a lift. Not knowing the identity of his passenger he said: "What do you think of Daniel Brenneman?" Willing to hear the worst and to go along with the conversation Brenneman evaded an answer and asked his benefactor for his opinion. The answer received seems very foolish now, but was of great significance then: "He speaks English and sings bass."

Daniel Brenneman inspired the church of his day by his fearless preaching and his undying efforts. His church building, his authorship of both prose and poetry, added to his work in beginning the publishing of the Gospel Banner and serving as its Editor, have all endeared him to the people of the United Missionary Church. His declining years were rich with a halo of God resting upon his efforts. He was ever available in season or "out of season". As an example of the latter, he was one day pushing his wheelbarrow home from his garden and as he passed a home where a funeral was to be held, the undertaker called to him and asked him to come and preach the funeral sermon as the engaged minister had failed to appear. Fresh from the garden, and with his work clothes only, he entered the house and ministered to the bereaved. Upon completion of the service he was on his way pushing his tools and produce toward home.

Much could be given here that is contained in the official records of the early Conferences, but perhaps the best testimony to these early leaders will be found in the history of the churches that were established and the record of the Camp Meetings as contained in the next chapter.



## **Part II — CONQUEST**

### **A Record of Early Progress**

There follows a series of histories which trace the advance of the work and the establishing of churches beginning with the Bethel Church, where the center of activity seemed to be.

### **BETHEL CHURCH**



The early days of the Bethel Church are quite synonymous with those of the Conference, for with Elkhart figuring largely in the plans, the work seemed to gravitate in the area where the Bethel Church is now located. In the winter of 1873 and 1874 a great revival was held at the Jones School House and many heads of families were gloriously converted. The Watermans, Nunnemakers, Rissers, Ummels, Krupps, Finks, Moyers, Pletchers, and others joined the group. In meetings held in the Kurtz and Jamestown School Houses the converts united their interest with the Jones converts.

They continued holding their services in school houses, but with the growth of the organized class at Jones it was necessary to look for a more convenient place to worship. After casting about for a place to erect a church building, the site offered by Christian Pletcher was chosen. In the spring of 1875, the ground was donated, and immediately the work of clearing the ground was begun. In the early winter the Bethel Church was dedicated. The United Brethren living in the community helped to build the church, and worshipped there until about 1900.

This, the first United Mennonite Church, was the center of worship, and the number of converts increased in various communities. Bethel became the center from which other places of worship were opened, and new classes were organized.

The Bethel Church has continued to furnish genuine leadership to the Conference by being active in promoting the work of the entire denomination. Quite significantly the Bethel Church has given the denomination four missionaries as well as pastors and workers at home.

God has blessed in the addition of extra Sunday school facilities as well as a most modern parsonage, which, with the former building, all continue to serve the rich farming area surrounding.

## **BRENNEMAN MEMORIAL CHURCH (Goshen)**

The origin of the local church dates back to the year of 1878 when, under the leadership of Daniel Brenneman, a class was organized which flourished for a few years, but because of some changes was discontinued for awhile, but re-organized after a revival in 1892. Rev. Will Huffman was the evangelist for this service with J. A. Huffman as the song leader. Those still living who were members of this re-organized group are Mrs. Frank Cripe and Mrs. T. H. Brenneman, both of Goshen.

The regular services were held in a hall in East Goshen for several years, after which a hall on South Main Street was secured, which served as a place of worship until 1895, when the church was built on North Ninth Street. This building, dedicated in January, 1896, was built from lumber from a church that was torn down in Mottville, Michigan, and hauled to Goshen by team and wagon.

In this new location there grew a well organized congregation until there was need of more room and better equipment to continue it's growth. A new location was sought which resulted in the present location at Jefferson and Eighth streets, where a modest and substantial building was erected as a memorial to the life and labors of Daniel Brenneman, who gave most of his life and much of his means to the Church. This building was dedicated February 22, 1925, under the leadership of the Pastor, Rev. W. H. Moore.





A continued growth was apparent and it became obvious that still larger quarters were needed. In 1944 a large new platform and eleven Sunday School class rooms were added. The basement was remodeled and the auditorium suited to a Primary Department. On November 26, 1944, under the leadership of Rev. Kenneth Geiger, this addition was dedicated. At the time of that dedication the pastor said: "There is no doubt that as long as we preach the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in its simplicity and purity and hold the standards of righteousness high the Church will continue to grow and be a blessing until Jesus comes."

Such was proven true and God has blessed the church until it became apparent that another enlargement was necessary. This time, under the leadership of Ray P. Pannabecker, this church built the Sunnyfield Church which was dedicated on January 11, 1953. Members from the mother church helped to man the new work which already is showing splendid signs of growth.

Beside the splendid enlargement insofar as numbers are concerned, many have been saved, sanctified, and called to full-time Christian work from this church.

## WAKARUSA

Some of the early members of the "New Mennonites" lived in and around Wakarusa. Such names as Smeltzer, Roose, Delcamp and Good, are prominent in the early days as they together with younger people who were converted held services in the old Baptist Church located on

the north end of the lot where the Lehman's filling station now stands. As a result of a revival in the North Union Church, 2½ miles southwest of Wakarusa, there were a number of converts among the younger people, who, together with those who had gone with the movement when it first began, transferred to Wakarusa. These continued to worship in the old Baptist Church. About the same time a revival broke out at what was the Loucks School House, three miles west of Wakarusa. A small church was erected one mile north of this school house, three miles west of Wakarusa, where the converts of this meeting continued to worship, the principle families being the Borders, Neffs, and Nettrours. Later the church was sold and the membership transferred to Wakarusa.

In the year 1891, under the pastorate of Rev. E. E. McDaniel, a tent meeting was held on the Henry Hygema farm, 3½ miles west of Wakarusa, and in October of the same year in the Baptist Church at Wakarusa. The Wakarusa meeting was one of the greatest soul stirring meetings that Wakarusa had ever witnessed. The house was packed to the door nightly, and many turned away. Many young married couples and young people were converted and united with the church, among them A. B. Yoder, who later become a prominent leader of the denomination. From this revival on the class began to grow until in the year 1910, during the pastorate of William Moore, it was decided to erect a new Church. On July 4, 1910, a group of men came together and in one day poured the cement for the entire wall, as it was before the annex was added.



The annex, the remodeled auditorium, and the consistent preaching of the Word have made this church attractive to many friends; and the church has consistently enjoyed the favor and blessing of God.



## BEULAH



Some of the families from Bethel, Wakarusa, and other places became burdened about a church in Elkhart and held a tent meeting on the spot where the Beulah church now stands. Rev. A. H. Kauffman, with the assistance of Mrs. C. A. Wright and Della Huggman, held a gracious revival which resulted in the organization of a Class and the erection of a small church. The lot was donated by Michael Bauer and wife. Early members included, Mr. and Mrs. Abe Rickert, Mr. and Mrs. Christian Nusbaum, Mrs. Liddy Stratton, Mrs. Libby Bixler, Mr. and Mrs. Ben McLaughlin, Mr. and Mrs. Hayse Table, Mrs. Bauer, and some of the Huffmans. Members from a Jamestown group were later transferred to Beulah.

They continued to worship in the small building until a very gracious revival resulted in the addition of so many new members that the building was not large enough. The present church was built under the ministry of David Hygema, and remodeled during the ministry of E. D. Mast. With still greater blessing from God the group found it necessary to add still more room, hence the parsonage formerly located just south of the church was moved across the street to a large corner lot, and the land that was available was used to provide space for a modern educational building.

This church has consistently been noted for faithful giving to the various causes of the Lord's work and has as well contributed generously to the manpower of the church at large. The church now currently conducts a growing Sunday school beginning to tax even the added facilities and ministers to countless others through a regular radio ministry.



## NAPPANEE



In the early history of this church the few members there held in joint ownership a church with the Evangelical body, located on the same lot where the Evangelical church now stands. In about 1897 or 1898 they sold their interest in this church and built the one where they now worship. Among the early members were Andrew Miller and wife, Mr. and Mrs. John Moyer, Mr. and Mrs. John Myers, the Good sisters, Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Golden, Mr. and Mrs. George Pratt, Mrs. DeHaven, Mrs. Gillette, Mr. and Mrs. John Brown, Mr. and Mrs. John Schrock, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Kreider, Mrs. Maggie DeFreese, and others.

In more recent years the church has added a beautiful front, enlarged classroom facilities and has renovated the basement for more efficient Sunday school operation.

## WEST UNION

In 1891, the year of the great revival in Wakarusa, David and Jacob Hygema held a meeting at what is known as the West Union Church, located on the Miami Street Road, south of South Bend. They were assisted by Katie Hygema, a sister. A gracious revival resulted in which some 60 of the notorious, outstanding sinners were converted. The meeting lasted for 8 weeks. Among the converts were Frank Pletcher and wife, Mr. and Mrs. James Kramer, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Good, Mr. and Mrs.



Frank Long, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bartlett, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wright, Mrs. Slough, and others. A class was organized that was known as the West Union Class. This Class has had its struggles, and the older members have almost all gone to their reward. A new set of faces is seen there, and the Class has made advancement in the last several years. Litigation concerning the land surrounding this property has made it unpleasant for the worshippers, but God has blessed and his Word continues to be heard from this sacred spot.

## FORAKER

In a revival meeting held in the South West School house by Mary Ann Hallman, now Simmons, and later by Miss Laura Maines, many of the fathers of persons prominent in the South West church were converted. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rohrer, Mr. and Mrs. William Anglemier, Mr. and Mrs. David Anglemier, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Buzzard, Mr. and Mrs. Abe Kercher, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Neterer, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Michael, Mr. and Mrs. Wogoman, Isaiah Rummel, Hartmans, Sinnings, and others. A Class was organized and the present church was built and dedicated in 1889, being given the name of Ebenezer. This Church is still the property of the United Missionary Church but is used by an independent group.

Some of the South West membership lived in the community of Foraker, and desired a place of worship there. During the winter of



1915 or 16, A. B. Yoder and Levi Weldy held a meeting in what was once a blacksmith shop, later converted into a church house by the Evangelicals, and in 1915 the building was bought by C. K. Curtis, Noah T. Clup, and A. B. Yoder, and later deeded to the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. It has been used since as the Foraker Church. The church was able to reach some that the South West group could not have reached. God has blessed this place and many are in heaven today that might have missed it had it not been for this church. Many changes have been made in the building, and it is contemplated as soon as possible to construct a new church with money now on hand for the purpose.

## OAK GROVE

The organized class at this point was the result of a long meeting of six or eight weeks, conducted by David Hygema, assisted by Miss Bertha Bartlet and other workers. The building was owned by the United Brethren who had discontinued services, and the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church members bought the church and organized a class, not without meeting with some severe opposition. The devil was on hand and did his utmost to have it as a union church. Some who opposed the church worked their way into places of leadership of the group, but in God's own time the work was established and today stands as a well-known and loved country church.

Names prominent in the history of this church include: Hygema, Gordon, Pittman, Johnson, Mikel, Lechlitner, Kling, etc. Under the lead-





ership of Rev. Russell Miller, the school house nearby was converted into one of the finest parsonages anywhere in the Conference, and under the leadership of Rev. J. A. Beery the church was remodeled and beautified until this corner is known far and wide for its beautiful church, but more than that for the faithful preaching and living of the doctrines of the Church.

## INDIANA CHAPEL



This Class had its beginning in tent meetings, and in services held in the Eager School House. Among the early members were John Rouch and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schutz, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Schutz, Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Nettrour, Mr. and Mrs. David Geyer, and the Simons Family. Others came in later. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Schutz donated the land on which the church property now stands. A very commodious church and parsonage grace the community.

In more recent years, under the leadership of Rev. Norris Hunsberger, some very worthwhile changes were made in the sanctuary and in the addition of a larger vestibule and front entrance.

## PLEASANT HILL



In this neighborhood near Bronson, Michigan, were living those who, under the ministry of Daniel Brenneman, were converted and left their church to hold meetings in schoolhouses and at the church in Fawn River. In the course of time the work centered at Pleasant Hill. The old church discontinued their services and the use of the present church was secured and later bought and remodeled. The early members were Isaac Good and family, Menno Good and wife, Sutters, Smiths, Hoard, Millers, Helsels, Imhoffs, and others. A very influential class of worshippers meet there, among the best of Noble Township. The older pilgrims are about all gone; they have heard the call, but their descendents are, with other newcomers, holding forth the Word of Life.

## CHAPEL HILL



This Class was the result of tent meetings held in the vicinity of Chapel Hill, and of meetings held in the old Quaker Church. These tent meetings were held by M. J. Carmichael, who lived in the community, and through his ministry a group was converted and the church organized. Mr. and Mrs. David Holdeman, members of the Wakarusa class, moved into this community, and their Godly lives were instrumental in the salvation of others. The present building was bought and moved to this location, being dedicated June 6, 1920.

Chapel Hill has given several full-time workers to the denomination and has been the proving ground for many of the present leaders of the church. Our thanks to a fine group of people who back the program of the church with all they have.

## MISHAWAKA

In the year 1895, following the Annual Conference held at Nappanee, a wave of evangelistic meetings was held in the Indiana District. A tent meeting was held at South Bend, under the labors of Rev. E. E. McDaniel and A. H. Kauffman, assisted by Jacob Hygema, who was then pastor at West Union.



As a result of this meeting a hall was secured in South Bend and services conducted for some time, later to be discontinued.

Some of the members moved to Mishawaka and a hall on the North side was used as a place of worship until a church was erected during the pastorate of John Singer. "Through many dangers, toils, and snares" this group was led with some hard places, and betrayals on the part of so-called friends. However, perseverance has won out and in recent years the church has enjoyed an ever increasing ministry in the community.



The present structure on Liberty Road is in the process of construction with a fine basement church and Sunday school and hopes for a completed building before too long. A comfortable parsonage graces the corner near the church.

## ZION

The church at Zion was the result of a vision that grew into a conviction of one who was teaching in the Concord Township Schools, and for several years took the school enumeration in Concord Township outside of the Elkhart City limits.

In taking the census south of Lusher Avenue and contacting Miss Sweitzer, principal of the Monger school, he learned that there were a-



bout four hundred children in that community that did not have any Sunday school privileges closer than down town. He, with the Home Mission Committee, erected a tent on the lot where the church now stands, and with help held a revival meeting, and spent time visiting the community. After several weeks, meeting it was decided to solicit the district for funds to erect a small church. The Monger Lumber and Real Estate Company donated the lot. The funds were easily raised for the building which was dedicated December 13, 1925.

The Sunday school was organized with J. B. Huffman, Deacon at Beulah, living in this community, acting as Superintendent. From the very beginning the school was encouraging. The enemy as usual stirred up opposition and busses were sent into the district to take children to other Sunday schools. However, a membership was formed and a pastor, J. W. Graybill came. He was followed later by Quinton J. Everest who was just beginning to be known as one of our pastors. Under his ministry, and upon a good foundation already laid, the church saw unusual growth until it became one of the strongest in number in the Conference. To accomodate the growing Sunday school the building has been enlarged twice. All this as the result of a vision by a teacher in the common schools.

Today the church owns additional land and has erected a modern parsonage and is contemplating further construction for young people's and children's facilities.

## BREMEN



Rev. Charles Everett began the work here in a small chapel built by another denomination, but abandoned, after an unsuccessful effort. Services showed that there was a favorable response from the people and the Home Mission Committee decided to buy the property. Funds were solicited to build or remodel and the present tabernacle was built with the hope of reaching a class of people that did not attend the other church. A few M. B. C. members lived there and in the surrounding community. The building was built early in 1932 and dedicated the last Sunday in May. In June, Rev. A. B. Yoder held a revival meeting under the direction of the Home Mission Committee and a class was organized. Congregations are maintaining a loyal interest in the Word and prevailing in prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this community.

## ANTIOCH

A tent meeting held in the neighborhood of the Antioch church by A. B. Yoder, resulted in the formation of a group ready for membership with no place to worship. Because of this difficulty the class was not organized. Some of the Christians moved to Goshen and worshipped there until in 1920 a few Christians in sympathy with the Mennonite Brethren in Christ deeded the present church over to the Indiana Conference, and a Class of about 20 members was organized.



An unpleasant experience in connection with the above mentioned revival involved the loss of privilege to use the church, formerly promised for the services. Rev. A. B. Yoder, together with several workers, was on hand for the services only to find that another minister was present and taking charge of the service. After the service the question of the use of the building was raised and it was thought best not to attempt to press claims and the evangelist and workers were taken to Decatur in a covered wagon to take the mid-night train for Elkhart, not defeated, but downhearted.



**MENDON UNITED MISSIONARY CHURCH**  
Write-up on Page 37

## CAMP MEETINGS

Co-incidental with the growth of the churches of the United Missionary Church in Indiana were the annual summer meetings patterned after those developing rapidly in various parts of the country.

Camp Meetings have been a major factor in promoting the growth of the church and have served as a summer stimulus to interest and work as well as being responsible for the conversion and sanctification of many of our present day leaders.

In order to tie in the effectiveness and history of the camps there follows a history of our camp meetings covering the 75 years since their inauguration.

Kentucky was the birthplace of the American Camp Meeting. That was in the late seventeen hundreds. This institution almost immediately became a mighty means of bringing new life to dying churches. Different denominations made good use of the camp meeting, — in particular those with a zeal to win the lost to Christ and to strengthen the spiritual life of their churches.

The evangelistic zeal which gave birth and beginnings to the United Missionary Church, then called Mennonite Brethren in Christ, was quick to recognize the value of the camp meeting. So, along with prayer meetings and revival meetings, it was one of the earliest innovations of the Church.

The first camp meeting in the Indiana District and the first in the history of the United Missionary Church, was held July 30 through August 10, 1880 in Fetter's Grove. Crowds up to 3000 from far and near came in farm wagons, surries, single buggies, and on foot. Special emphasis was given to the doctrine of entire sanctification. Under the Spirit-anointed preaching of Elders Jonas Musselman, Abel Strawn, Menno Bowman, and the ministers of the Indiana Conference, many found Christ in saving and sanctifying power.

Until 1918, the camp meeting was held in different places. For several years, it was held in the Joseph Rohrer grove, 4½ miles east of Wakarusa; two years in the Shoup grove just west of Goshen College; two years in the Miller grove on the Lincoln Highway east of Dunlap; two years in the Garber grove south of Dunlap; two years in Burns park, 2 miles south of Goshen; again two years in the Shoup and two years in the Miller grove; then one year in Theodore Wolf's grove west of Dunlap.

Getting the grounds ready for camp meeting in those days was a whole week of work for the Camp Ground Committee. A well had to be put down. Tents and lumber were hauled in by wagon and horses. The tents had to be put up for services and campers, seats, platforms and hitching racks built. When camp was over, the whole procedure had to be reversed — almost another week of work for the Committee.

The inconvenience and extra work of moving the camp made it apparent that a permanent grounds should be secured. A. B. Yoder, J. A. Freed, Emanuel Rohrer, Clarence Good, B. F. Berry, and J. C. Bontrager were appointed as a Committee to look for a permanent camp site. The present grove of 8 acres was selected and purchased in 1918 for \$2,000, and a much needed store room 20x40 feet was erected.

At the camp meeting in 1919 it was decided to erect a pavilion. With much gratis help the work was completed in 1921 at a total cost of \$12,000.00 for grounds, pavilion and wells.

Dedication took place July 10, 1921, with Rev. N. W. Rich as speaker; and a new era began in the history of the camp meeting of the Indiana District — one of modernization and expansion.

Steady growth in the Indiana Conference, the inauguration of the Youth Program, and modern conveniences have made it necessary from time to time to improve and enlarge the facilities of the Camp Ground. In 1940 a spacious dining hall was erected; in 1942 modern rest rooms with showers were built; in 1943 two dormitories for girls were constructed and in 1952 one for boys. In 1950, the tabernacle was completely revamped, — platform changed to the east end, seats were completely reconditioned, and a concrete floor took the place of wood shavings.

The most recent extensive expansion program was launched in the 1952 Camp Meeting under the leadership of Rev. Kenneth Geiger. By the time of the 1953 Camp Meeting, a 20 foot addition had been built on both the north and south side of the tabernacle, and a two story addition on the dining hall, the first floor enlarging the dining hall facilities, and the second floor providing convenient dormitory rooms for the Camp Meeting Committee. This expansion program when completed calls for another addition to the tabernacle and the erection of a suitable dormitory for camp meeting workers.

Seventy-five years have brought many physical changes to the Camp Grounds and some changes in the technique of presenting the Gospel, especially in working with the children and youth. These were essential as a means to the end of a more effective and ever enlarging ministry.

The altar lined with seekers again and again in recent years is ample evidence that God honors the unique ministry of the Camp Meeting — unique in that it is a Conference-Wide cooperative effort of evangelism. Coming as a mid-summer spiritual refresher, it has been a means of measureless blessing in the past and holds limitless possibilities for the present and future.



## Part III — CONCENTRATION

### New Life and Expansion at home and abroad

As is sometimes the case after the fire of a revival breaks out, and successes are enjoyed, there follows a period of consolidation when the past looks good, and the present seems satisfactory. This attitude sometimes results in a loss of zeal and leaves only a shadow instead of the substance. That danger was ever present in the period following the early successes of the United Missionary Church. However, there was a mounting interest in home missions, which, coupled with the already existing foreign missionary program, seemed to compliment the efforts being made and the Indiana Conference began a period of concentration upon winning the lost. To do this meant a world vision as well as a community vision. While one could not be preferred before the other we will report the progress at home and conclude with the history of foreign missionary endeavor.

Some years had passed since the erection of the church known as Zion, in Elkhart, and the opening of work in Bremen. Then a new fire caught in the hearts of the leaders, and a series of new churches has been opened.

### CONSTANTINE



The Constantine United Missionary Church really had its beginning as the result of Your Worship Hour radio broadcast under the direction of Rev. Q. J. Everest. It was interest created by this broadcast that provided the contact with the community.

In the summer of 1938 the Conference Home Mission Committee requested Rev. Kenneth Geiger, newly appointed pastor at Chapel Hill, 15 miles away, to open a work in this town. The Grange Hall was rented and Bro. Q. J. Everest served as evangelist in a series of special meetings. Bro. Geiger, who pastored both at Chapel Hill and Constantine, recalls that there were less than six local residents present for this first service. Attendance and interest increased and the American Legion Hall was rented until a basement church was built in 1943.

Rev. Norris Hunsberger became a full-time pastor in 1941 and a charter membership of 22 was formed in the same year. The superstructure was completed and dedicated on May 25, 1947, after the project was temporarily halted by a fire the previous fall.

Rev. Willis Woods became pastor in 1948 and attendance reached an all time high of 157 average under his ministry. When Bro. Woods became pastor of one of our Washington Conferences churches in 1953, he was succeeded by Rev. William Hesse.

Under the ministry of the present pastor, Bro. Hesse, the lot and house next to the church have been purchased. This home has been re-modeled into a lovely parsonage.

## WEST ECKFORD



Early 1943 Rev. J. H. Kimbel and Rev. Norris Hunsberger discovered West Eckford, a closed rural church near Marshall, Michigan. Bro. Kimbel made a survey of the community with the backing of the Home Mission Committee, and it was decided to open the building. An option was secured, and the Sunday before Easter in 1943 it was opened. Help was rendered by the Pleasant Hill Church, where Bro. Kimbel was the pastor. In June he was stationed at West Eckford. The growth was steady but not spectacular. In due time many improvements were made — a new roof, a new furnace, a new organ, the church completely carpeted, a new parsonage, a landscaped parking area, etc.

In 1949 Rev. Gordon Bacon succeeded Brother Kimbel as pastor. Under his ministry a great spirit of revival prevailed, and a strong visitation program was inaugurated. All Saturday night prayer meetings became a regular occurrence. The church grew. In 1952 Rev. Paul Wagley was assigned as pastor. About that time it was decided to expand the building. The basement of a 30'x56' addition was constructed, which greatly facilitated the work of the Sunday School. At the present time the church is getting ready to construct the super-structure over that addition. The Sunday School now averages 200 and a spirit of revival prevails.

All this has been accomplished by a miracle of God's grace—not in a thriving metropolis but rather in a rural community six miles from town, with four other churches within five miles of it. "They" said it couldn't be done. But, God proved that it could be.

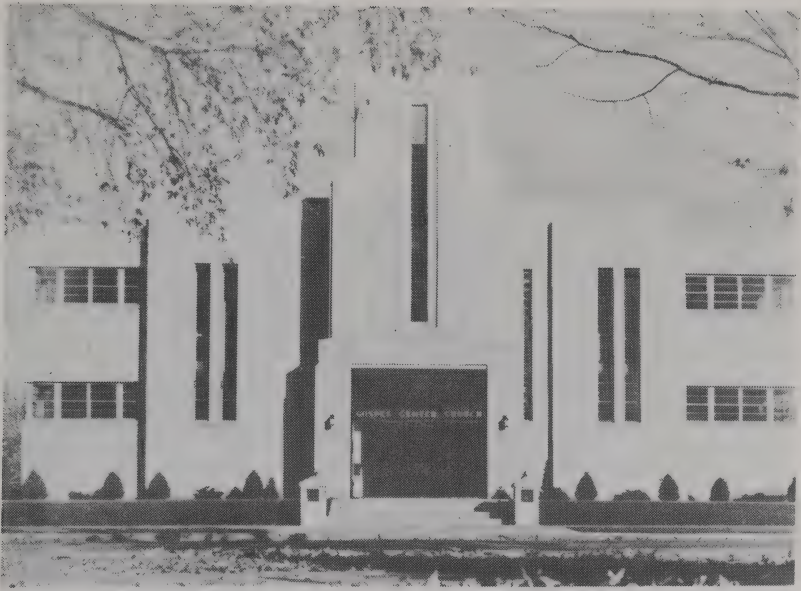
## GOSPEL CENTER

Located at 930 - 30th Street South Bend, Indiana, the Gospel Center Church stands not only as a monument to the miracle working power of a great God but also as one of the citadels of the faith in our nation.

This work was started the last Sunday in November, 1935, in a portable building rented from the Seventh Day Adventists at a rental rate of \$50 per month. This was rented for one year and then purchased for \$1,000. The lots on which the present church building is now located were purchased October, 1938. The present building was started in the fall of 1939. A portion of the basement and a number of classrooms were sufficiently completed to hold services. From this beginning until the early summer of 1943 this was known as the Old-Time Gospel Tabernacle and operated as an independent work.

In 1943 the present pastor, Quinton Everest, was contacted in view of becoming the pastor of the tabernacle. After a few months of prayer and consideration he accepted and moved to South Bend on September 16, 1943. After Bro. Everest accepted the responsibility of serving as the pastor, it was considered advisable to change the name from **Old-Time Gospel Tabernacle** to **River Park Gospel Center**.





After considerable renovation and completion of several areas of the basement building, a special dedication service was held September 19, 1943. A parsonage located a block and a half from the church was purchased for \$7,500.

Through these years the Sunday School has come from nothing to a present average attendance of over 600. The church services, young people's meeting, Bible schools, Women's Missionary Society, and the radio ministry have likewise grown proportionately.

In September, 1954, the church purchased an adjoining residential property for the purpose of expanding the Sunday School facilities. The total material valuation of all Gospel Center property is now substantially \$350,000. In practically every way the work has been the direct miracle-working of a great God.

## OSOLO

The first service of the Osolo Church was a Sunday School held on Sunday afternoon, August 24, 1924, in the Old Methodist Church across the road from the present church building. Later this old chapel was sold to the Success Grange. Services were then held for a while in the Osolo consolidated school. This proved unsatisfactory, so plans were made for a basement building which was completed in 1938.

The preaching of scriptural holiness was introduced and several ministers from the United Missionary Church, then called Mennonite Brethren in Christ, filled the pulpit. As the result of this contact with the Conference, the Osolo church became a member of the Denomination in 1944.

Delmer Horn was assigned this pastorate in 1945. Under his leadership, the basement structure soon became inadequate. The superstructure was started May 18, 1946, and completed in 1948. The enlarged facilities and the aggressive leadership of Brother Horn, under the blessing of God, sent the average attendance from 88 to 224 in six years.



Osolo is now one of the larger congregations in the Conference. Located in a fast growing section of Osolo Township three miles north east of Elkhart, Rev. Dean Freed, the present pastor, and his people find themselves faced with the urgent need of more room. A complete remodeling program is being contemplated for the near future.

## **WEISSER PARK**

The Weisser Park United Missionary Church is located in the southeast section of Fort Wayne, Indiana, on the corner of Warsaw and Boltz streets.

This work was originally known as the Old Time Religion Tabernacle and was operated as an independent work under the leadership of Howard Paschall, it's founder and pastor until his decease in 1944. A few months after his passing, Mrs. Paschall approached the officials of the Indiana Conference with regard to taking over the work of the Tabernacle. After several meetings with Mrs. Paschall and after much prayer, the Conference Trustees accepted the offer of Mrs. Paschall to deed the Tabernacle property to the Indiana Conference. The Tabernacle furnishings were purchased for the sum of \$5,000.



Taking up his duties November 1, 1944, Rev. Orlan Golden served this church as it's first pastor seven and one half years, followed by Franklin Lusk, and then Rev. Paul Brenneman, the present pastor.

The growth of this church has not been rapid but is has been steady, showing gain each year. It's clearcut Evangelical message has not only won souls to Christ, but also has won the confidence of the community. Until 1954 this testimony reached out to a large listening audience through a radio ministry each Sunday morning from 7:30 - 8:00 over WOWO, Indiana's most powerful broadcasting station.

Fort Wayne is one of Indiana's largest cities with vast new housing projects being built to care for it's ever increasing population. The pastor and people of the Weisser Park Church are thinking of their church as a base for advance into new housing areas—a healthful state for any church.

## **CEDAR ROAD**

Known as the "Church With The Lighted Steeple", the Cedar Road United Missionary Church is located on Cedar Road between Osceola and Mishawaka, Indiana.

A burden for this needy community led Rev. and Mrs. Clyde Burris to start services in a small garage in 1941. Later a basement church was built on Peony Street. The Community Chapel Church, as it was then known, was pastored successively from 1946-1949 by Rev. Paul Storms and Rev. Robert Bontrager, during which time affiliation with the Conference took place.



Under the supervision of Church Extension Director, J. H. Kimbel and with the untiring efforts of the present pastor, Rev. Floran Mast, a beautiful brick and block colonial type church 30 by 70 feet was erected in 1950. Rapid growth made it necessary to build an additional two-story educational unit in 1952. The edifice now includes three auditoriums and twenty-two class rooms.

The attendance has grown from an average of 60 in 1949 to 248 in 1955. During this time, a beautiful ranch type parsonage has been built and adjoining lots to the church purchased for further expansion. Present evaluation of property is \$50,000 compared to \$3,500 in 1949.

The Lighted Steeple of the Cedar Road Church is a true symbol of her ministry. Few Sundays go by without someone making a decision for Christ. Not only are her ministries for Christ leading many out of darkness into the marvelous light on the home front, but also on a farther field where her missionary, Rev. Charles Wesley Hunsberger, holds forth the Word of Light and Life in the dark continent of Africa.

Much credit for the success of this church must go to the pastor and his wife who have been untiring in their efforts and to a few families who believed enough in Home Missions to leave their home churches and give their full support to the Cedar Road Church.



With present facilities taxed to the limit, the pastor and his people, under God, expect to meet the challenge of their growing community by further expansion of facilities and continued sacrificial efforts for Christ.

## BURR OAK

In 1948 Bro. Jesse Bellman, and a group of people from the Pleasant Hill Church, near Bronson, Michigan, began holding services in a community hall over the library in the town of Burr Oak, Michigan. In 1949 lots were purchased for a church building site, a parsonage was purchased, and Bro. Clyde Burris was secured as pastor. Since there was some hesitancy on the part of the Home Committee to invest a sizeable amount of money in a building, it was decided that a prefabricated structure be erected. Designed and directed by Bro. Milo Miller, a layman of the conference, a 28'x48' prefabricated building was erected.



There has been a slow but steady growth at Burr Oak since its beginning. For the past two years Bro. James Collier has been assigned as pastor here. The building lacks Sunday School space and the parsonage, a block away, is used to house a number of classes. A building program is contemplated in the near future. There are some choice saints of God in this place. The town is not large, but the opportunity is ample for preaching the Gospel, and for the establishment of a strong church in this area.

## HAMILTON CHAPEL

Located in a rural area nine miles northeast of Dowagiac, Michigan, the Hamilton Chapel United Missionary Church stands largely as a monument to the faith of one individual. The need of this community was put

upon the heart of Mrs. Howard Gribbler whose husband owned 40 acres in this area. Her burden became so great that she threw herself and what resources she had into the gap. An old house on her husband's land was made into a place of worship and services started. The way was not easy, but prayer and faith kept the doors of the little chapel open.

Hearing of the Church Extension work of the Indiana Conference, Mrs. Gribbler contacted Church Extension Director J. H. Kimbel with regard to supplying Hamilton Chapel with a pastor. Harold Brown, Robert Ditmer and Albert Beutler served the little church successively as pastors on a part time basis. This association led the people of Hamilton to affiliate with the Conference as a Home Mission Church in 1953.

Rev. Russell Wright has served as pastor since 1952. Under his leadership, the attendance increased, but gains were hard to hold because of the inadequate building. Early in the summer of 1953, construction of the new church was begun on the large plot of ground donated by the Gribblers. Under the supervision of Church Extension Director J. H. Kimbel, the pastor, with voluntary help from the churches of the Conference, had the building, although not completed, ready for occupancy early in 1954.



Today this edifice of modern design, 36 by 72 feet, stands not only as a monument to faith, but also as a gospel lighthouse in a township where there are no other churches.



## WAYSIDE CHAPEL



This little church is located on the corner of Hollyhock and Arthur streets, north of the limits of suburban Roseland, just outside South Bend. It was started in 1950 by a group of Bethel College students who rented a small building near to where the present building is located. After some time they were forced out of the little building. They then had to move three miles away in order to find a place to worship, transporting the children back and forth. After a time this building was in the path of a new highway, was condemned and torn down. About this time the Conference became interested. In fact, Brother Kimbel had given some guidance to the work from its beginning. Star Machine, Inc. of Elkhart, took the responsibility of financing a modest 24'x36' chapel on the present site. Clifford Hazzard was pastor until shortly after the erection of this building in 1951. From that time until the present Rev. Marvin Engbrecht, an ordained minister from the Nebraska Conference on leave to attend Bethel College, has been the pastor. Attendance has been as high as 114 in this tiny chapel although it is difficult to conduct so many classes in such close proximity. This church is only three blocks from the new high school. There are no other evangelical churches in the area. There is a great opportunity for a strong church with a spiritual witness.

## MENDON

In 1949 young people from the West Eckford Church made a religious survey of the town of Mendon, finding some spiritual interest, and the evidence of a great need. There were two closed churches in this town. An attempt was made to buy one or the other. Both attempts

failed and the buildings were torn down. In 1950 a small building, with a motley background, was purchased, and remodeled into a modest chapel. Rev. Charles Hunsberger, then in school at Bethel College, now a missionary in Africa, accepted the challenge to become the first pastor. Many were the trials and testings those first years, but God led. A number of people became saved and sanctified. One young man is now at Bethel preparing for full time Christian service. During the Hunsberger's stay at Mendon, a balcony and mother's room with rest room were added to the facilities. Upon their acceptance by the Foreign Missions Board in 1952, Bro. and Sister Harold Brown accepted this pastorate. God gave them a gracious ministry for two years after which time they answered the call to foreign service, and were also sent to Africa. In 1954 Bro. and Sister Elmer Miller were sent by the conference to Mendon. This has definitely proved to be the will of God. A wonderful revival during the year has caused the revitalization of the entire church. Attendance is higher than ever before, now averaging in the 80's. The church is now entirely self-supporting. New converts are zealously working for the Lord. God has sent in new people from the community. Some spiritual leaders have moved into the town and come "our way." The crying need of the moment is a new building. We believe this to be the will of God, and expect that before long it shall be accomplished.

Picture on Page 25

## NILES



For several years prior to 1950 several United Missionary people had felt deeply that God wanted us to have a church at Niles, Michigan. Early in 1950 Rev. Kimbel began holding weekly prayer services in the

home of Bro. and Sister Craig Coates. The group was small for a while—usually comprised of the Coates, the Calverts, the Bensons, and the Kimbels. In the fall of 1950 lots were purchased in the Parker East subdivision just outside the city limits of Niles. This came about in a miraculous way. God laid the matter of putting \$500. into the Niles Building Fund upon the heart of one of the group. This person did not know why. Later, the excellent lots were reduced from the original price of \$1500. to the sum of \$500., and this money was available; The building is a twin to the Cedar Road Church. It is built of red brick, 45' wide and 70' long, of colonial architecture. There is a two story Sunday School section back of the sanctuary. It is a beautiful building and blends well into the neat subdivision with its many nice homes. A parsonage was purchased a few blocks away in Oak Manor, an adjacent subdivision.

The church was opened in May of 1951 by Bro. Kimbel. At the Conference in June, Rev. Russell Miller was assigned as pastor. He labored there under the blessing of the Lord until 1953. Rev. Delmer Horn was assigned at that time. Bro. Paul Loucks was assigned as assistant pastor. There has been a steady, rather than a spectacular growth at Niles. Numbers of families have been won to Christ. There is a great challenge presented to the church at Niles.

## LIGONIER



In 1950 the attention of the Home Mission director was called to a closed church north of Ligonier, Indiana. Rev. Kenneth Geiger and the people of the Brenneman Memorial Church of Goshen enthusiastically took part in a revival at this church. However, the response from the



immediate community was not great. About this time we heard from some of the people about a closed church in Ligonier. It was their opinion that this would offer a better opportunity for a home mission work. We secured an option on this brick building on South Sixth Street. In 1951, on Easter Sunday, this church was re-opened, with Rev. Donald Conrad as pastor. At the end of the six months option period, it was decided to buy the building. Bro. Conrad, along with his father (now deceased) Bro. Mirl Conrad, of Goshen, and other men from the Goshen Church and from Ligonier, excavated and built an excellent basement under the church.

Bro. Conrad served the church well until June of 1953, when Rev. Gordon Enfield was assigned as pastor. In 1954 Rev. Earl Hartmen was sent to pastor this church. In recent months there has been marked progress at the church. We believe there is a bright future here. In addition to some of our own people from around Ligonier who have come over to help, we appreciate very deeply the untiring efforts of Bro. and Sister Warren Charlton, of Goshen. Bro. Charlton has been our S.S. Supt. here for several years. More recently we have been happy to add to the ranks Bro. and Sister Walter Myers, who have been driving back and forth from Wakarusa to help in this work.

## CASSOPOLIS

Four years ago last September (1951) a group of people from the Osolo United Missionary Church began to hold services in an old brick building two miles south of Cassopolis, Michigan. This building is approximately one hundred years old. It was being used as a community



hall. Bro. Carl Grove was secured as the pastor. As the congregation grew the building became inadequate. On one occasion when Bro. Grove came to fix the fire he found that almost all the windows on the north side had been broken. At other times the oil stove smoked miserably.

In July of 1953 a property was secured in Cassopolis at 116 South O'Keefe Street. It included, in addition to a spacious residence, a 26'x46' building. It was later decided that an addition 26'x40' be built on the front of this building and that it be made into a church. In August of 1954 this was begun. It is surprising what ingenuity, perspiration and faith can do! It hardly seems possible, the change that has taken place! We now have a building adequate for a Sunday School of 250. The Yoder Ready-Mix Company donated all the cement, Mr. Endicott of the Church Furniture Company gave us a large contribution toward the pews, and over \$300 in cash was raised toward the project from people of the Conference. Many pastors and laymen helped in the construction. The Willing Workers Sunday School Class from our Wakarusa Church became a "big brother" to this church, giving hundreds of dollars to the building and the subsidizing of the pastor. There is a real need for a Gospel work in this town, and we now have the needed facilities.

## GRANGER

On Easter of 1952 the United Missionary Church helped two Bethel College students, Bro. Howard Van Harlingen and Bro. Irwin Baine, to start service in an old brick school house near Edwardsburg, Michigan, (Garver Lake). Bro. Van Harlingen was appointed as the pastor. This old building was used simultaneously by a community farm organization.



As time went on a form of persecution took place and it became increasingly evident that we were unwanted in this building, even though it was owned by the township. At the end of one year we were forced out. There being no other building available, Bro. Van Harlingen invited the group to meet in the recreation room of his home, about three miles away. Conditions became crowded as the work grew, attendance reaching as high as 60 or more. Prayer was made to God continuously by the people regarding a building. Help from other churches came in the person of the Daniel Ummel family and the Ira Lovell family. Bro. and Sister Clarence Rouch accepted the challenge and partially financed the erection of a building on a beautiful site one mile northeast of Granger, Indiana, on State Road 23. The money for the lots was furnished by Bro. Bob Ringenberg, The Bontrager Construction Company and the local people. A modest but beautiful colonial brick church was erected, but only the basement completed. It was opened on Easter in 1954. The congregation worshipped in the basement for one year. Through the sacrificial giving of the people and the generous aid of Brother Bontrager the upper sanctuary was completed and services began in it on Easter Sunday, 1955. On that day there were 112 in Sunday School. Others who have "come over" to help in this work included Bro. and Sister Otto Kirish and a number of Bethel College students and their families.

## SUNNYFIELD CHURCH



The germ idea for this church was first known when at camp meeting time, someone gave a challenge that each larger church ought to sponsor a new church. The idea was further developed around a supper table when the Trustees of the Brenneman Memorial Church met to consider the idea. Viewing the suggestion with favor, the Trustees went that



very evening to a meeting of the congregation and presented the plan. In due time the land was purchased, ground breaking was held and construction begun.

On January 11, 1953, the small chapel was dedicated in the presence of a large congregation.

Rev. Karl Kerlin, the new Pastor, had been present in the final weeks of construction and now took over with a strong nucleus of workers. Intense Sunday school activity, community visitation, and a vision of revival have characterized the members and friends of this church. God has shown his favor and the community friends have come in until in its early months the church is operating with a Sunday school of well above 100 and growing regularly.

## AUTEN CHAPEL



The Auten Chapel Church was closed for a time. It finally came to the attention of some God-fearing people in the community who believed that it should be opened, and who did something about it. In the fall of 1951 Brother Kimbel discovered that they were without a pastor and offered aid. Rev. Kenneth Robinson, a professor at Bethel College, was secured as the pastor, and the church is making fine progress. Over a year ago a large Sunday School addition was built. Much of the work has been done by the men of the church. At present they are in the process of remodeling the sanctuary. Before last Conference (in 1954) a membership was formed and the congregation became a regular United Missionary church. Although until the present time the church is operated under the Home Mission department, it has been self-supporting right along, and is contributing to our missionary enterprise and to Bethel College. We appreciate deeply the work of this fine congregation.

## LA PORTE



The beautiful brick colonial style LaPorte United Missionary Church, located at the south edge of LaPorte on the corner of 18th and A Streets, is a monument to the faith and vision of a number of people who felt the need of establishing a United Missionary Church in this industrial city in the northwest part of Indiana.

In 1951, Rev. Paul Mast was appointed pastor of this church and construction was begun November 1. The progress on this church, so that the first service could be held January 4, 1953, is a credit to the consecrated craftsmanship of the pastor who, under the supervision of Church Extension Director J. H. Kimbel, labored untiringly with what voluntary help came from the churches of the Conference.

The facilities of the church are adequate to operate a Sunday School of 200 and to house the pastor and his family in a four room apartment. Built of brick and block, this 34 by 75 foot colonial type edifice with its 58 foot steeple has a distinction and dignity of which the community and the Conference can be justly proud.

In the little over two years of its operation, the LaPorte church has made remarkable progress. The attendance on the opening Sunday was 67. The average during April 1955 was 188. The all time high was 215. One hundred and fifty is a conservative estimate for first time decisions for Christ. Many have walked in the light of the "Deeper Life" preaching and teaching of their capable and consecrated pastor.

The way this church is moving forward will make expansion an urgent need in the not too distant future. The lots upon which the church is located are large enough for a parsonage, future expansion and ample parking facilities.

## EDISON PARK

Early in 1952, the young men of the Ministerial Association of Bethel College began to think and pray about the possibility of helping build a new church in the area of the new subdivisions northwest of the college. The Home Mission Committee of the Conference approved this project. Lots were purchased and a building erected through the backing of the Star Machine Co. of Elkhart. God marvelously led in the purchase of lots in Edison Park. What was then open fields is now a vast housing project. A new million dollar elementary school is now built and open near the church. Bro. Glenn Marks, a young minister, with a background of building experience, was hired as the first pastor. Under his direction and the guidance of Bro. Kimbel, the building was erected, along with some donated labor from Bethel students.



This building is 28'x48', is built of brick crete, of a modified-gothic architecture. The church was opened on Easter Sunday in 1953. At conference time Bro. Marks felt led of God to resign, and Rev. Donald Young was assigned as the pastor. There has been a slow but steady progress here. A few United Missionary people came to help. These included Bro. and Sister Oscar Munson, and Bro. and Sister Merl Holdeman. Bro. Holdeman is the Sunday School Supt.

In recent months we have been thrilled by new adult converts. The future looks bright at Edison Park. The building is not large — it is the first unit of an eventually much larger church plant. We have ample room for expansion there on the corner of Solomon and Congress Streets. The present crying need is for a parsonage, the basement of which could house another Sunday School department.



## LA GRANGE



In 1952 interest was shown in the United Missionary Church going to LaGrange, Indiana. Bro. and Sister Vern Kehr, members of the Foraker Church were moving to this city, where he operated a business establishment. A lot was purchased in 1952. However, opposition, in the form of a petition signed by 70 property owners, was used in trying to keep us from using this lot, or even from building a church in the town. It was finally decided that the lot was too small, and another location was purchased, along with a parsonage. Brother Kehr encouraged our faith by donating \$1,000 to the building fund.

In 1953 Rev. Norris Hunsberger was stationed at LaGrange and work began on the church. It is a building of masonry construction, 28'x48' in size, with a full basement and a hot water heating system. The church was built on a "pay as you go" basis, and because of this was longer in the process of construction. Bro. J. C. Bontrager purchased pews. It was opened on the first Sunday of January in 1954. The church is growing and is now accepted in the community.

## NORTH MANCHESTER

Sometimes the death of an old church brings about the birth of a new one. Undoubtedly, this was true at North Manchester. Burdened by the signs of spiritual death in their church, a small group there banded themselves together in prayer for a spiritual awakening.

Revival did not come to their church, but through a series of providences, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dawes, members of this group, were brought in contact with Church Extension Director J. H. Kimbel who explained to them the work that was being done by the Indiana Conference in starting new churches. Convinced they were being led of the Lord, Mr. and Mrs. Dawes invited Kimbel to visit the praying remnant at North Manchester.

The initial Conference contact with the North Manchester folk was made by Rev. Kenneth Geiger and Rev. Joe Kimbel. Both were deeply impressed by the spiritual caliber of these people and their sincere desire for a spiritual church home.

This friendship was fostered further by weekly prayer meetings with these people, conducted by Brother Kimbel during the Spring and Summer of 1953 in view of establishing a church soon. Prayer was answered by the purchase of lots in August, the assignment of Rev. Glenn Marks as pastor in October, and the beginning of construction early in November.



Today a beautiful colonial style church 33 by 69 feet made of brick and block stands at the east edge of North Manchester as a monument to the faith of a few. Worshipping happily in their new church home, these few are being joined by others of like precious faith. Together their clear cut testimony is leading to the salvation of souls and the sanctification of believers. All signs at the North Manchester Church point ahead to days of spiritual prosperity.

## A HISTORY OF FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK

The history of the foreign missionary activity of the church antedates the period in which it is offered, but since the two are closely related they will appear together although it will be necessary for the reader to return in his thoughts to the early days to connect on to this portion.

With this local interest in the lost souls of men, it was not surprising that the call of the heathen, unreached by the Gospel in foreign lands should have been heard by our predecessors.

As a denomination the work may be said to have begun in 1867 when the Evangelical Mennonites of Pennsylvania organized a Missionary Society. The General Conference of 1882 passed the following resolution. "Whereas, we see the great necessity of doing Foreign missionary work, and inasmuch as many have manifested a desire to contribute to the cause; therefore,

Resolved, that each annual conference adopt a system to collect foreign missionary funds and report the same to the next General Conference." The succeeding General Conference made another request: "That each annual conference put forth earnest efforts to raise means for Heathen Mission Work, and each minister preach at least once a year at each of his appointments on the subject."

This earlier effort was not well organized for there was still much to do at home, so it was not until 1890 that a member of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ stepped on foreign soil as a missionary, and then not officially. Eusebius Hershey of Pennsylvania felt the call and went under his own efforts, after a fruitful life of witnessing in Pennsylvania and Ontario. The History of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church gives eloquent treatment of his departure and death: "It is stated that as his vessel left the harbor, he stood with his right hand pointing heavenward until he passed beyond the range of vision. He was not only going to Africa, but evidently to heaven, by way of Africa, for he soon succumbed to the African climate, and his body lies buried in the sands of Liberia.

"It might appear to the casual observer that Hershey's African mission was a failure, but not so. While he took no direct conference approval nor commission, he took, unknown, perhaps, to himself and others, the hearts of a score or more future missionaries. God had used him to press the cause of missions upon hearts in the homeland, by precept, and then permitted him to do so by example."

Earliest missionary activity relating to the Indiana Conference was in 1898 when Miss Rose Lambert (Mrs. David Musselman) daughter of



Rev. Geo. Lambert of Indiana, went to Turkey to take up work among Armenian Children who had been orphaned. Sailing from New York, November 12, 1898, Miss Lambert and a Miss M. A. Gerber arrived in Hadjin on December 28.

The work in this area of the Lord's vineyard prospered, especially in the care of the many orphans. It was natural that when one had gone from Indiana that others would follow. In 1905 Henry Maurer joined the staff, a little later Miss Katherine Bredemus and Norah Lambert also began. Work included the establishing of an industrial mission and the development of talents latent in the persecuted peoples and with a desire of seeing them saved.

The first heartbreaks in the cause developed in this area when Miss Adeline Brunk, also from Indiana, succumbed to typhoid fever, three weeks after her arrival. A short time later Mrs. Henry Maurer also died from the same disease. In less than a year, April 15, 1909, Henry Maurer was shot to death by Moslems. Added to these losses was the departure of Miss Rose Lambert for America because of failing health.

Our two remaining Indiana representatives, Misses Katherine Bredemus and Norah Lambert continued to serve until 1914 when world war conditions necessitated their departure to America. Following the war Miss Bredemus returned for another period of service.

Activities in other parts were now in evidence and in 1897 Calvin F. Snyder of the Pennsylvania Conference began work in China under the Christian and Missionary Alliance Board. Miss Phoebe P. Brenneman from Indiana, a daughter of Daniel Brenneman, also went out in 1904, and was married to Calvin Snyder in 1908. Together they labored for 43 years in the challenging field of China. At this time they are enjoying retirement in a missionary rest home in California.

Work in Africa was progressing since official beginnings in 1901, but as yet no one from Indiana had gone to that continent. The same may be said for India where the denomination opened work more or less officially in 1908.

In 1920 the foreign mission works of our various conferences were united by this resolution which was passed at a result of a petition supported by the Indiana Conference: "Resolved, that the recommendations of the Ontario, Indiana and Ohio, and Nebraska Conference be granted; that a General Conference Foreign Mission Board be organized; that all Conferences which desire to unite in the same be encouraged to do so; that no Conference be required to do so." In response to this action, and with representatives from the interested conferences in attendance, an organizational meeting was held within the limits of the Indiana Conference, in Elkhart, early in January of 1921. This historic gathering saw the Constitution and By-Laws formulated. These documents were presented to the Conferences for ratification and October 4 - 5, 1921, again in Indiana, this time at Goshen, the United Missionary Society came into being.

The United Missionary Society has continued to serve and to expand in the years since that official beginning. It has been Indiana's honor to provide two Presidents of the group: J. A. Huffman, and Quinton J. Everest. Others from the Conference have served, including A. B. Yoder who was secretary for many years.

In tracing the development of missionary interest in this conference it would be unfair to omit the Women's Missionary Society, although it came into being some 16 years later. This branch of our foreign work has contributed greatly both in interest and study, and also in actual giving. Many of the essentials of home life in America have been provided for our missionaries abroad through the efforts of the ladies. In addition this group has led in the supporting of missionaries, assuming entire support of various ones.

With the missionary zeal mounting, Indiana began to catch on and soon we had noble men and women volunteering for this ministry. The Bethel Church located on Oakland Avenue south of Elkhart has contributed splendidly to this increased zeal giving us a modern pioneer and martyr to the cause. Rev. Joseph Ummel left for Nigeria in 1922 and was used of God to open new works. Irene Stouder from Goshen followed soon and spent three years in the Nigerian Field. It was in 1927 that Mabel Hygema, daughter of David Hygema was married to Joseph Ummel and took her place at his side working faithfully with him until his untimely death in 1943. Since that time Mrs. Ummel has continued to serve. Going back to 1924 we see another Ummel, and again a representative from the Bethel Church, going to Nigeria. Paul Ummel took up service in 1924 and with his wife Phoebe Brenneman Ummel, who joined him in 1928, they continue important service to our work. It has been their personal responsibility to labor among one of the hardest tribes yet encountered in Nigeria, the Dakkakkari. After some years of heart-breaking efforts the Gospel has penetrated, lives have been saved, and translations made into the mother tongue.

The next generation of missionaries, started with the appearance of L. R. Sloat, again from the Bethel Church, Brother Sloat entered the work in 1935 and continues to this time serving in the very responsible position of Field Superintendent.

Mean while work in South America had been laid upon the hearts of our people and Elizabeth Wise from the Oak Grove Church heard the call and entered Columbia in 1942. She remains faithful to the work in spite of open opposition and threats of persecution.

In 1944 a new movement of workers started toward the missionary fields. From the Brenneman Memorial Church which for 20 years had not furnished a missionary there started a stream of candidates led by Angeline Tyson in 1944. Soon John and Helen Blosser left for India, starting their services in 1945. Currently, John Blosser is serving the Church as Field Superintendent for India. The movement of workers continued from this church with Wayne and Hilda Brenneman leaving for Nigeria in 1947 and Charles and Hilda Hunsberger in 1953. Jake Hostetler, a product of the evangelistic effort of this Church, together with his wife Margaret now serve in the Dominican Republic, since 1952.

From other Churches there were candidates in an ever enlarging number. From Beulah, John and Betty Bontrager left to begin service in Nigeria in 1944. Elizabeth Best from Chapel Hill entered service in 1947 in Nigeria, later being joined in marriage to Virgil Pollock.

Recent additions to the corps of missionaries in our society have included Naomi Everett who is serving in Nigeria for her first time. Also included in this number is Shirley Gall, Lloyd and Barbara Lilly, and Harold and Anna Brown.

Indiana continues to furnish leadership to the missionary work of the denomination. In 1947 Richard and Ruth Reilly sailed for India where they labored with our mission as well as the Youth for Christ work. Due to a break in health it was necessary for Richard to return home, and before he ever left Indian soil he had been invited to become the General Secretary of the United Missionary Society. This position he has humbly accepted and satisfactorily filled since December, 1953. His predecessor, Rev. Roy Adams, had served faithfully for a short time before resuming work in Japan. Brother Adams, with his wife, retain membership in our Beulah Church.

The latest move in our missionary endeavors has reached the needy Islands of Japan where we have a cooperative work with the Oriental Missionary Society. Rev. Roy Adams is heading up this work in Japan and is supported by the Indiana Conference. In addition we have sent to Japan from Indiana, Mr. and Mrs. Lester Ike from our Niles, Michigan Church.

Even more recent than the work in Japan is the decision of the United Missionary Society Board in its 1955 annual meeting to open work in Brazil, South America. This action followed a trip by three Indiana men to that country, namely: Rev. Richard Reilly, Rev. D. Paul Huffman, and Mr. Donald Granitz. The first missionary couples to go to this country are Rev. and Mrs. Earl Hartman, formerly pastor at Ligonier, and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Granitz.

If we have seemed to emphasize Indiana too much, our readers will realize that we have been trying to bring you up to date on our missionary activity. We praise God for what has been accomplished in the dedication of the lives of these fine workers. We also thank our many people, who regularly have remembered the various missionaries and their needs in prayer. Many special prayer meetings have been held for this very purpose. Needing special mention is our thanks to our constituency for the faithful and generous giving which through these years has continued to increase and frequently has led all other Conferences. According to unofficial statistics the Indiana Conference has contributed \$610,241.66 during the past years of foreign missionary endeavor.

We wish to express appreciation to the numerous missionary prospects who are preparing at Bethel College and other schools. Some have definite calls and are awaiting the date when they may enter the ranks of these faithful witnesses. Our prayers are with these, and our support will continue to be given, and until Jesus returns we shall attempt to continue fulfilling the Great Commission.



## Part IV — CONTINUATION



Where? . . . . from here?

**A challenge from our District Superintendent.**

God has in the past seventy-five years of United Missionary Church history in the Indiana Conference verified His promise of Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

This promise still stands with respect to the future. We have only begun in this great work! We know of nothing that would indicate desire to coast at this time. Our laity and ministry have in various ways indicated an enthusiastic determination to continue making the Indiana Conference of the United Missionary Church aggressive in the promotion of all phases of the work of our denomination.

As is indicated by the outline of this presentation, our church has been one of the more conservative groups. What we have done, we have done well. What we have built, we have built solidly. To our shame, however, we acknowledge that we have been slow to recognize and seize opportunities. We have stayed rather close to home. For decades now we have not established a new Conference. Vast areas of these United States do not know the United Missionary Church. We have been a "sleeping giant"! Thank God, we are beginning to awaken! Within our own Conference this awakening has been progressively apparent. A gradual approach to the need and challenge of home missions was followed by the election of a full-time church extension director and a period of concentrated effort in building and opening new churches. After a brief period of consolidation and debt-liquidation we expect to launch another program of expansion far greater than anything in the past. The lessons learned in the past will help us in the work of continuation tomorrow.

The Indiana Conference has been a leader in the opening of Bethel College and has contributed substantially to the support of this institution. Bethel College is serving us well and deserves our continued prayers and financial help. Our continuing work is related to this institution and the giving back to the church by the College of our fine young people who are trained academically and who are filled with the Holy Ghost.

Our continuing work must also include the promotion of our foreign missionary cause. Spiritual life cannot be preserved when we at the same time ignore the Great Commission of our Lord. We view the vast mission fields of the world, still untouched, as a great challenge to the United Missionary Church. The Indiana Conference is proud to be associated with the other member Conferences of the denomination in the United Missionary Society. The successes of the past, the organizational structure and spirit of cooperation within the Society, and the continued blessing of God insure a promising future and represent a challenge to our young people to present themselves as God leads for world service.

At the 1951 General Conference the Indiana Conference responded to the appeal of the Washington Conference for help. In due time, under General Conference authority, the Washington Conference was made a mission Conference under the Indiana Conference. This relationship has continued to the present with the blessing of God. three Indiana pastors have taken assignments in Washington. Our Indiana District Superintendent has given much time in administrative work in the west. This action on the part of Indiana indicates the vision we have for expansion of our work and the promotion of the work on a denominational level as well.

Upon various individuals from time to time has fallen the responsibility of leadership. We are proud to list our predecessors as District Superintendent of the Indiana Conference. The memory of their sacrificial service lingers as a challenge to-day. God has kept a complete record. His reward will be full and rich. All but three of these fine men are now in heaven.

The following have served the Indiana Conference as District Superintendent (or Presiding Elder as they were known in the earlier years): Daniel Brenneman, A. B. Yoder, C. K. Curtis, W. H. Moore, H. E. Miller, and W. E. Manges.

The writer who has been serving as District Superintendent since 1951 is humbled to now be listed as one of the above. We pray that God may help us to continue the work which has begun and to build upon the foundation which has been laid.

We need and earnestly desire the passion of our blessed Lord which caused Him to say, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." John 9:4.

Kenneth Geiger, District Superintendent

## Part V — CORONATION

**The best is yet to come**

Faithful continuation until the end of life's race assures the Christian believer of his ultimate Coronation.

Building upon the foundation laid by our fathers in the past, the United Missionary Church purposes to fulfill her mission in the world. The vision of the present leadership includes continued progress and advance. There will be no retreat. With the cross of Christ ever before us we march on to victory!

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3: 13, 14.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Revelation 2: 10.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

Revelation 21: 7.

"When all my labors and trials are o'er,  
And I am safe on that beautiful shore,  
Just to be near the dear Lord I adore,  
Will thro' the ages be glory for me."









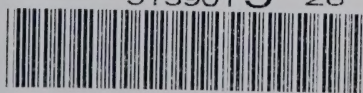




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